

Rochester, NY - Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules, today commented on the advancement of Emerisque's purchase offer for Hickey Freeman's parent company, Hartmarx, during an out-of-court auction proceeding.

Rep. Slaughter said, **"I am encouraged by the continued progress being made to avoid liquidation and to ensure that Hickey Freeman will continue to operate and employee hundreds of hardworking Rochesterians. I look forward to the court approving the sale agreement advanced today so that the new owners can begin their efforts to grow Rochester's Hallmark brand, Hickey Freeman."**

Earlier this month, British equity firm, Emerisque, joined with SKNL North America to bid a \$128.4 million purchase offer to acquire Hartmarx and Hickey-Freeman. On June 2, 2009 a bankruptcy court designated the Emerisque offer the "stalking horse" bid, meaning it would be permitted to proceed should no higher bids emerge during today's auction.

Since no other bidders exceeded Emerisque's offer today, Emerisque is in position to complete its purchase offer, pending court approval and final sale closings. The court will convene an objections hearing tomorrow morning followed by an afternoon sales hearing to approve the sales bid. If the court approves the sales bid tomorrow, the closing could occur within the next two weeks.

Rep. Slaughter has stood alongside Hartmarx's union workers in supporting Emerisque's bid since the company has pledged to continue to operate Hartmarx as a going concern, preserve the company's "Made in America" status, and work in a mutually agreeable manner with the union to preserve jobs.

Rep. Slaughter has a long history of supporting Hickey-Freeman and its employees. Once it became clear that Hartmarx was in jeopardy, Rep. Slaughter began working with Wells Fargo, Hartmarx's chief creditor, Hartmarx CEO Homi Patel, and Emerisque officials to avoid liquidation and secure a buyer for Hickey-Freeman that recognizes the company's value and

preserves jobs in Rochester.

Over the past several years Slaughter has successfully enacted tariff relief for the high-quality fabrics required by Hickey-Freeman. This work has been instrumental in ensuring that Hickey-Freeman, does not move its operations out of the country, has adequate supplies, maintains competitive prices, and remains one of the profitable components of Hartmarx.

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